

## FIRST UNIVERSITY DEGREES BY FIELD OF STUDY

### *Key Findings: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom, United States*

In all of the countries presented, more first university degrees were awarded in social sciences, business, and law than that of any of the other fields shown—humanities and arts; science; engineering, manufacturing, and construction; and education.

In 2001, 44 percent of first university degrees awarded in the United States were in the general field of social sciences, business, and law (figure 22). This percentage is not measurably different from the 43 percent of first university degrees awarded in the United States in the following fields combined—humanities and arts; science; engineering, manufacturing, and construction; and education. In Germany and the United Kingdom, the percentage of first university degrees awarded in social sciences, business, and law was lowest among the countries shown (27 percent), although even in these countries this represents a higher percentage of first university degrees awarded than that of any of the other fields shown.

In the United States, the field with the next largest percentage of first university degrees awarded among the fields shown

was humanities and arts, at 17 percent. Among the other countries shown, the percentage of first university degrees awarded in humanities and arts ranged from 13 percent in Italy to 23 percent in France.

Eleven percent of first university degrees awarded in the United States were in the science field. Among the seven other countries presented, only in the United Kingdom were at least 20 percent of first university degrees awarded in science; Japan had the lowest percentage of its degrees awarded in this field, at 3 percent.

In the United States, 7 percent of first university degrees were awarded in the general field of engineering, manufacturing, and construction. Except for Canada (8 percent) and the United States, all other countries presented had between 11 and 20 percent of their first university degrees awarded in this field.

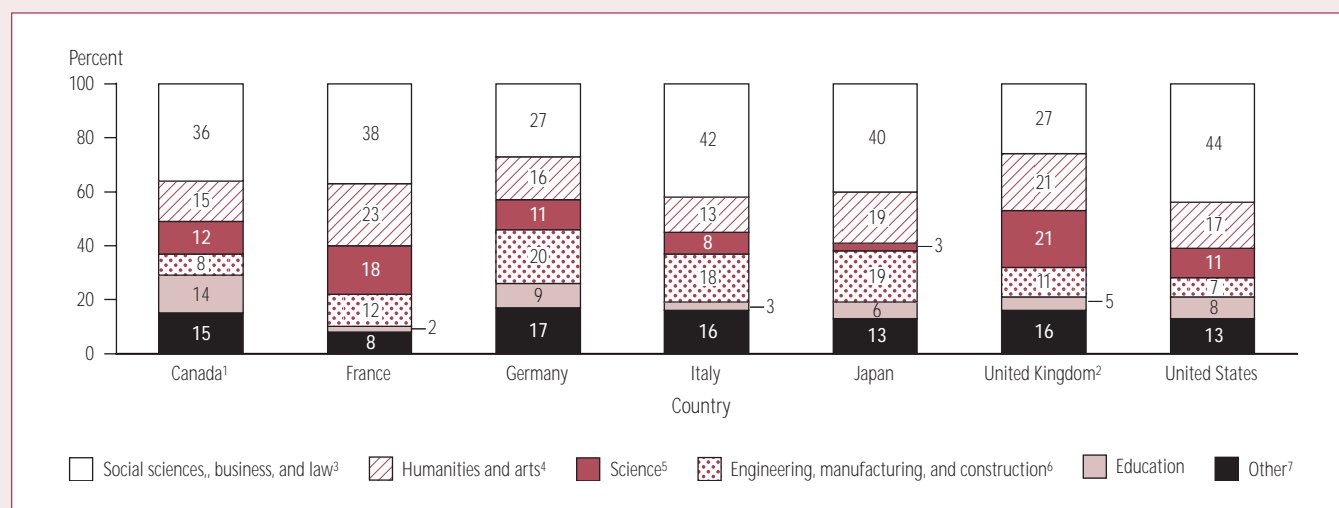
Eight percent of first university degrees awarded in the United States were in education. All other countries presented had between 2 and 14 percent of their first university degrees awarded in education. In France, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom, the lowest percentage of their degrees were awarded in education, at 2, 9, 3, and 5 percent respectively.

### *Definitions and Methodology*

Programs that prepare students for advanced research and highly qualified professions are classified as first university degree programs, which corresponds to ISCED level 5A. First university degrees vary in duration in different countries in different programs of study. In the United States, the first university degree corresponds to a bachelor's degree; it excludes associate's degrees. For a complete description of the ISCED levels, see the appendix.

The percentage of first university degrees awarded in each of the four fields shown is the share of these degrees awarded in each field relative to all first university degrees awarded in all fields for a given year.

Figure 22. Percentage distribution of first university degrees awarded, by field of study and country: 2001



<sup>1</sup>Data for Canada are from 2000.

<sup>2</sup>The United Kingdom includes England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.

<sup>3</sup>Includes social and behavioral sciences (ISC 31), journalism and information (ISC 32), business and administration (ISC 34), and law (ISC 38).

<sup>4</sup>Includes arts (ISC 21) and humanities (ISC 22).

<sup>5</sup>Includes life sciences (ISC 42), physical sciences (ISC 44), mathematics and statistics (ISC 46), and computing (ISC 48).

<sup>6</sup>Includes engineering and engineering trades (ISC 52), manufacturing and processing (ISC 54), and architecture and building (ISC 58).

<sup>7</sup>Includes agriculture, forestry, and fishery (ISC 62); veterinary (ISC 64); health and welfare (ISC 72); and services and degrees not known or unspecified.

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding. The fields of education shown follow the 1997 revision of the International Standard Classification of Education Major Field of Study (ISCED MFS) (UNESCO 1997). Programs that prepare students for advanced research and highly qualified professions are classified as first university degree programs, which corresponds to ISCED level 5A. First university degrees vary in duration in different countries in different programs of study. In the United States, the first university degree corresponds to a bachelor's degree; it excludes associate's degrees. For more information on ISCED levels, see the appendix.

SOURCE: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Education Database, September 30, 2003.